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An Analysis of the Media Coverage of *Neues Deutschland***

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IV. CHILE

Solidarity or System Stabilization? Chilean Exile in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) – An Analysis of the Media Coverage of *Neues Deutschland*

by

DAVID KRISTEN
AND GEORG STURM

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the instrumentalization by the SED (Socialist Unity Party of Germany) of granting asylum to Chileans in the GDR after the military coup in 1973. By conducting both quantitative and qualitative content analysis of *Neues Deutschland* media coverage, the outstanding importance of Chile to the GDR is shown. This study is based on the post-positivist understanding of frames as interpretation schemes that structure and create different social realities. Based on three main repetitive frames: *international class struggle*, *opposition to illegitimate state* and *antifascist myth*, this article argues that the displayed resistance against the dictatorship in Chile and the solidarity with Chilean opposition and exiles aimed to justify and stabilize the GDR state system. The solidarity with Chile and the admission of refugees was stylized in order to underline the moral superiority of the GDR's ideological framework in the context of Cold War. The high number of related articles and the multitude of analyzed articles support the theoretical assumptions and highlights the instrumentalization of Chilean Exile to the GDR. The findings indicate that the media coverage can be understood as a tool for system stabilization while the solidarity seemed to be existent in a variety of actions.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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INTRODUCTION

The Chilean Cause is our Cause.
Erich Honecker, 12.09.1974^{1,2}

After the military coup against the democratically elected socialist government of Salvador Allende in 1973, up to one million Chileans fled the country. About 2000 Chileans sought refuge in Eastern Germany during Pinochet's 17 year rule.³ Solidarity with the "antifascist resistance of the Chilean people"⁴ against the internationally criticized authoritarian military dictatorship, and with the supporters of the Chilean Way to Socialism⁵ played an important role for the German Democratic Republic (GDR), whose national identity was based on antifascism and international

class struggle. The Chilean case was of special importance to both supporters and opponents of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) regime, which led to an extraordinary presence in the GDR media. This article analyses the dominant discourses used to present the GDR's solidarity work with Chile by examining the media coverage of the official party newspaper of the SED. We demonstrate the reasons other than humanist solidarity that might have led to the GDR's admission of Chileans fleeing from the military junta. We argue that although the solidarity was real, the main purpose was to highlight the moral justification of the GDR's own system, and their usage of narratives such as antifascism, class struggle and opposition to unjust government. This instrumentalization had the objective of stabilizing the GDR regime by gaining legitimacy among their own population.

The case of Chile demonstrates the global dimension of the Cold War, and how domestic politics affected by international system conflict developed their own dynamics. By attempting to establish socialism via democratic elections as a "third way" between capitalism and communism, the political project of Salvador Allende was drawn into these dynamics and found its sudden end in the 1973 coup. This paper follows the conceptual frameworks in the field of international history, analyzing the Cold War as a global phenomenon transcending its simplistic characterization as a

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- 1 Erich Honecker cited in "Brüderliche Begegnung mit Kämpfern der Unidad Popular," *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 1-2.
 - 2 All citations are translated from German to English.
 - 3 Jost Maurin, "Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument – Chilenische Emigranten in der DDR 1973–1989," *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, no. 2 (2005): 346.
 - 4 "Alle Völker der Erde sind an unserer Seite," *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 5.
 - 5 Salvador Allende coined the term "the Chilean Way to Socialism" (Also: The Chilean Road to Socialism) as a metaphor for the proper ideas and implementation of socialism in Chile. Sometimes it is also referred as "third way" between the two predominant ideologies capitalism and communism.

bipolar conflict of two superpowers.⁶

Referring to the military overthrow, the General Secretary of the SED, Erich Honecker highlighted the extraordinary importance of solidarity with Chile to his country in his speech during a meeting with leaders of the Popular Unity (UP) published by *Neues Deutschland* (ND). He emphasized that the “Chilean people are certainly not alone”, since “all progressive, democratic, humane, upright people all over the world” were supporting them. As citizens of the “first German workers’ and peasants’ state” Honecker considered their “internationalist class obligation [...] to do everything in order to help the Chilean people to free themselves from the scourge of fascism.”⁷

While the SED presented their support for the opposition in Chile as an act of humane and selfless solidarity, this was not self-evident, as the handling of the Argentine military dictatorship shows. Human rights violations of the military junta were not publicly rejected, as in the case of Pinochet’s dictatorship. This demonstrates how the GDR dealt with similar regimes selectively depending on different factors,

such as economic interests.⁸

This speech also illustrates the rather rationalist reasons of self-interest that might have driven the GDR to grant asylum to Chilean refugees: the military coup of Pinochet had been widely rejected by many countries all over the world. Since one of the main purposes of Eastern German foreign policy was to gain international appreciation, the SED-government tried to place itself at the head of the international solidarity movement with Chile.⁹ Moreover, many East German citizens—including those in opposition to the SED-regime—supported the government of Salvador Allende, since it was taken as evidence that a socialist transformation via democratic elections was possible.¹⁰ Therefore, the harsh criticism of Pinochet’s military coup and the following dictatorship, and the politics of solidarity with Chilean opposition served the purpose of gaining support among the

6 For more information see: Richard H. Immerman and Petra Goedde, *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

7 Erich Honecker cited in “Brüderliche Begegnung mit Kämpfern der Unidad Popular,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 1-2.

8 Sebastian Koch, *Zufluchtsort DDR?: Chilenische Flüchtlinge und die Ausländerpolitik der SED* (Sammlung Schöningh zur Geschichte und Gegenwart, 2016), 111.

9 Patrice G. Poutrus, “Zuflucht im Nachkriegsdeutschland. Politik und Praxis der Flüchtlingsaufnahme in Bundesrepublik und DDR von den späten 1940er bis zu den 1970er Jahren,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Zeitschrift für Historische Sozialwissenschaft*, no. 35 (2009): 135–175.

10 Koch, *Zufluchtsort DDR*, 113.

population by depicting a common enemy and referring to the antifascist founding myth of the GDR. As the term “solidarity” is of central importance for this paper, a brief theoretical embedding is reasonable. Considering the political dimensions and our argumentative approach, the most appropriate definition seems to be a “relation that unites a collective of individuals who are collectively responding to a situation of injustice, oppression, social vulnerability or tyranny.”¹¹ This definition displays clearly the two components relevant for the consideration of Chilean exile in the GDR: first, the “commitment to collective action”¹² resulting from the common perspective of the events in Chile, and second, the opposition to these “oppressive social structures.”¹³

POLITICAL DIMENSION OF CHILEAN EXILE

The implementation of this solidarity was the acceptance of Chileans escaping after September 11th, 1973. The political elite of the SED had free leeway as paragraph 23 of the GDR constitution of 1968 sets a “can” regulation for the granting of

asylum: “The GDR can grant asylum to citizens of other states (...) if they have been persecuted for political (...) activities in defense of peace, democracy, the interests of the working people (...)”¹⁴ Interpreting who fulfills these criteria and receives the opportunity of asylum was incumbent upon the political agenda. SED meeting minutes indicate that granting asylum should be limited to members and supporters of the UP.¹⁵ Besides their designation as exiles and refugees, Chileans were mostly called political emigrants.

Research dealing with political emigrants in the GDR focuses on the right of asylum and the political dimension of the admission practice. By analyzing the protocols and reports of the SED and the Ministry for State Security (MfS) Patrice Poutrus argues that, even though presented differently in public, political emigrants “were not equal members of a transnational socialist collective but tolerated guests of a nationally defined German community.”¹⁶ Poutrus also highlights the differences between the official presentation of political

11 Sally J. Scholz, *Political Solidarity* (The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 197-199.

12 Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 480.

13 Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, 480.

14 *Verfassung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik vom 6. April 1968, in der Fassung vom 7. Oktober 1974*, (Berlin: 1974), Abschnitt II, Kapitel 1, Artikel 23 Absatz 3.

15 Maurin, “Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument,” 347.

16 Poutrus, “Zuflucht im Nachkriegsdeutschland,” 160.

emigrants.¹⁷ Although the total numbers of political emigrants were rather low, especially compared to other groups such as immigrant workers, in the official propaganda they played a highlighted role. The goal of their public description was to generate the picture of “good immigrants”, “freedom fighters” and “antifascists.”¹⁸ According to Poutrus, these descriptions of the Chilean immigrants were used to reach skeptical citizens that might have rejected the ideas of the GDR, in order to prove the humanist mission of the socialist state and regain legitimization. Even though he highlights the propagandistic dimension of asylum and outlines how migrants suffered from the lack of legal guarantees, Poutrus concludes that the GDR sometimes granted asylum and economic support for migrants generously.¹⁹

Jost Maurin examines the political dimension of the admission of Chilean emigrants by depicting the admission process and the composition of the group of emigrants, the majority of who were active members of the Communist and the Socialist Party of Chile. Maurin describes the manifold problems of integration, such as the “proletarianization” of the Chilean emigrants, who, even though mostly academics, were forced to do manual labor.²⁰ Moreover, he analyses how SED officials tried to shape the political work of the Chilean opposition by financing their foreign office and work in the GDR, and by pushing the Socialist Party and the Communist Party of Chile to merge into a Communist Unity Party.²¹

The most extensive work on Chilean emigrants and the solidarity work of the GDR is by Sebastian Koch, who focuses on the tension between publicly represented claims on asylum policy and actual motives of the state by presenting in detail the situation of exiled Chileans amidst the reactions of the population and their interactions. Unlike Poutrus and Maurin, whose work is mainly based on GDR files, Koch also compares these insights with narratives of contemporary witnesses.

17 Patrice G. Poutrus, “Mit strengem Blick. Die sogenannten Polit. Emigranten in den Berichten des MfS,” in *Fremde und Fremd-Sein in der DDR. Zu historischen Ursachen der Fremdenfeindlichkeit in Ostdeutschland*, ed. Jan C. Behrends, Thomas Lindenberger, Patrice G. Poutrus (Metropol Verlag Berlin, 2003), 231-250.

18 Olaf Groehler, “Antifaschismus - Vom Umgang mit einem Begriff,” in *Zweierlei Bewältigung. Vier Beiträge über den Umgang mit der NS-Vergangenheit in den beiden deutschen Staaten*, ed. Ulrich Herbert and Olaf Groehler (Hamburg, 1992), 29-40.

19 Poutrus, “Zuflucht im Nachkriegsdeutschland,” 161.

20 Maurin, “Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument,” 353.

21 Jost Maurin, “Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument: chilenische Emigranten in der DDR 1973-1989,” *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, 2 (2005): 356-358.

Except for the work of Poutrus²² and Maurin,²³ who used media reports exclusively to accentuate the research results of the investigation of official files, there is little to no systematic research on how Chilean emigrants and the solidarity work of the GDR were presented by the state-owned media. Historical research on political emigrants in the GDR, even taking into account the propagandistic function of asylum and solidarity, disregards the importance of media and propaganda during the Cold War, which was mainly constituted by an ideological conflict and can also be understood as a “battle for the conquest of human minds.”²⁴

By examining the reporting of *Neues Deutschland* this article aims to interpret how the media coverage of the official party newspaper reflects the intentions and functions of SED’s solidarity with Chile. This study addresses the tension between solidarity and system stabilization. Being the official party newspaper of the SED with a circulation of a million copies, and being regarded by foreign countries as the regime’s diplomatic voice, ND was the SED’s main way to communicate to citizens

and foreigners. Using interpretative qualitative content analysis we aim to deconstruct the media coverage to identify the dominant discourses used to present the GDR’s solidarity work with Chile. We argue that there were different frames (international class struggle, opposition to illegitimate state, antifascist myth) that were used to present the resistance against the dictatorship in Chile and the solidarity with Chilean opposition to gain legitimization among the GDR’s own population as well as international appreciation. In addition to our main method, the content analysis of ND, we conducted two interviews with contemporary witnesses in order to take the personal perception of Chilean exiles into account.

This article is structured into three sections. First, a brief quantitative overview of the media coverage of *Neues Deutschland* from 1969 to 1989 in order to display the representativeness of the findings of the qualitative content analysis, as well as to show the extraordinary importance for the SED. Second, a qualitative interpretation of the framing, answering the question of how the SED presented its solidarity work and the GDR’s role in the opposition to Pinochet’s dictatorship. Finally, a contextualization of our findings regarding the ideological dimensions of the Global Cold War and the propagandistic and system stabilizing function of solidarity.

22 Poutrus, “Mit strengem Blick,” 231-250.

23 Maurin, “Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument,” 345-374.

24 Benedetta Calandra and Marina Franco, *La guerra fría cultural en América Latina. Desafíos y límites para una nueva mirada de las relaciones interamericanas* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos, 2012).

THE CHILEAN WAY TO SOCIALISM

Placing the Chilean happenings into the framework of the Global Cold War is rather convincing. The signed copy of Che Guevara's book, *The Guerrilla War*, which reads "To Salvador Allende, who is trying to obtain the same result by other means. Affectionately, Che"²⁵ illustrates perfectly how the political project of Unidad Popular was seen as part of the communist camp, while being different in some ways. The main difference was the attempt at a peaceful system transition via democratic elections and later an office administration without repressive instruments. The election campaigns and political work of Allende and the UP represented the perfect international class struggle that the SED regime invoked constantly.

This struggle applies even more for Salvador Allende's three-year presidency, which was characterized by an incisive process of reforming the social and economic policy of Chile. The main fields of action were the nationalization of natural resources, especially of copper; and an agrarian reform at the expense of large landowners. The success of Allende and with it the related fear of a "second Cuba" provoked

the intervention of the United States. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) played an especially important role in destabilizing the Allende administration. Besides the boycott of the economy resulting in an economic depression, the CIA took measures to subsidize the Chilean Newspaper *El Mercurio* and infiltrate the Chilean military and political parties.²⁶ The final result was a military coup led by the general of the armed forces, Augusto Pinochet, which brought the attempt of establishing democratic socialism to a sudden end on the 11th of September, 1973. The military junta immediately started to arrest and in numerous cases torture and murder political activists and sympathizers of the UP.

Consequently, the GDR granted asylum to about 2000 Chileans fleeing persecution.²⁷ Compared to the estimated one million Chilean refugees²⁸ this number remains low, but played an important role in the public presentation of the extraordinary case of Chile for the GDR. The overwhelming majority were members or supporters of the socialist or communist party that were able to leave the country

25 Regis Debray. *The Chilean Revolution: Conversations with Allende* (New York: Pantheon Books/Random House, 1971), 74.

26 *The Church Committee - The Church Report* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975).

27 Maurin, "Flüchtlinge als politisches Instrument," 345-374.

28 Inga Emmerling, *Die DDR und Chile (1960-1989): Aussenpolitik, Aussenhandel und Solidarität* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2013), 393.

in different ways and at varying moments of time, mostly supported by the “Actions of Solidarity” (Solidaritätsmaßnahmen) the Central Committee agreed on fourteen days after the coup.²⁹ According to reports by contemporary witnesses, the reception of the Chilean exiles proceeded mostly unbureaucratically, and the provision of housing, clothing and temporary financial support was given generously.^{30,31}

ABSOLUTE NUMBERS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILE FOR THE GDR

Although the military coup in Chile was not unique and the total number of Chileans seeking asylum in the GDR remained low compared to other immigrant groups, Chile represented a case of exceptional importance for the public media coverage. Starting with the quantitative analysis of the media coverage of *Neues Deutschland* that is summed up in *Figure 1*, the outstanding importance of Chile is visualized. While Cuba as a country of importance for the Warsaw Pact was regularly represented in the media coverage, the number of articles regarding Chile exceeded

those of Cuba between 1973 and 1977, in some cases by almost 500. At its peak, the number of articles about Chile reached a total number of 1519 in 1974, one year after the military coup, which makes an average of nearly four articles per day. This was also the year that most Chileans arrived in the GDR and many solidarity events took place.

The cases of Greece and Argentina were selected due to comparable events, as both suffered a military overthrow of a democratically elected government and, consequently massive human rights violations.³² Although both countries, especially Argentina, showed numerous parallels with the developments in Chile, this is not reflected in the media coverage as the numbers of related articles in *Neues Deutschland* remained almost always below those about Chile. This is also true for 1976 when the military overthrew president Isabel Perón in Argentina, and for 1967 when the same occurred to prime minister Georgios Papandreu of Greece³³.

Additionally to the comparisons to other countries, *Figure 1* also shows the number of articles about Chile that are related

29 Katrin Neubauer, “Exilchilenen: Leben in der DDR,” *Lateinamerika Nachrichten* 287, (1998).

30 See: Interviews conducted by Sebastian Koch, *Zufluchtsort DDR*, 111.

31 Self-conducted interviews with two Chilean exiles.

32 Nicos Mouzelis, “On the Rise of Postwar Military Dictatorships: Argentina, Chile, Greece,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28 (2009): 55-80.

33 The numbers for Greece remain on a low level with the only exception during 1968, the year of the military overthrow (1966: 140 articles, 1967: 604 articles, 1968: 278 articles).

to the keywords (anti)fascism, (anti-) imperialism and solidarity. These keywords are characteristic of the GDR's discourse, showing how the previously displayed frames can also be found quantitatively. The keywords are the linguistic expressions for these frames: solidarity to a nation that is struggling, and fascist overthrow supported by the American imperialists against the working class. The terms fascism and imperialism were often used to describe the military dictatorship in Chile, and antifascism and anti-imperialism were essential ideals of the GDR's socialist ideology. Besides the importance of (anti)fascism and (anti-)imperialism as narratives

for class struggle, opposition to illegitimate states, and the antifascist myth, solidarity played an even more important role in the official media coverage of the ND. Being a combination of all three frameworks, this keyword explains the frequency of the articles regarding Chile, almost half of which published between 1973 and 1978 dealt with solidarity. By 1973, the number of solidarity related articles about Chile already added up to the amount of 576, rising to 710 in 1974. References to (anti)fascism and (anti-)imperialism also remained high: 193 articles on Chile were related to (anti)fascism and 220 to (anti) imperialism. The concept of solidarity was even more important considering

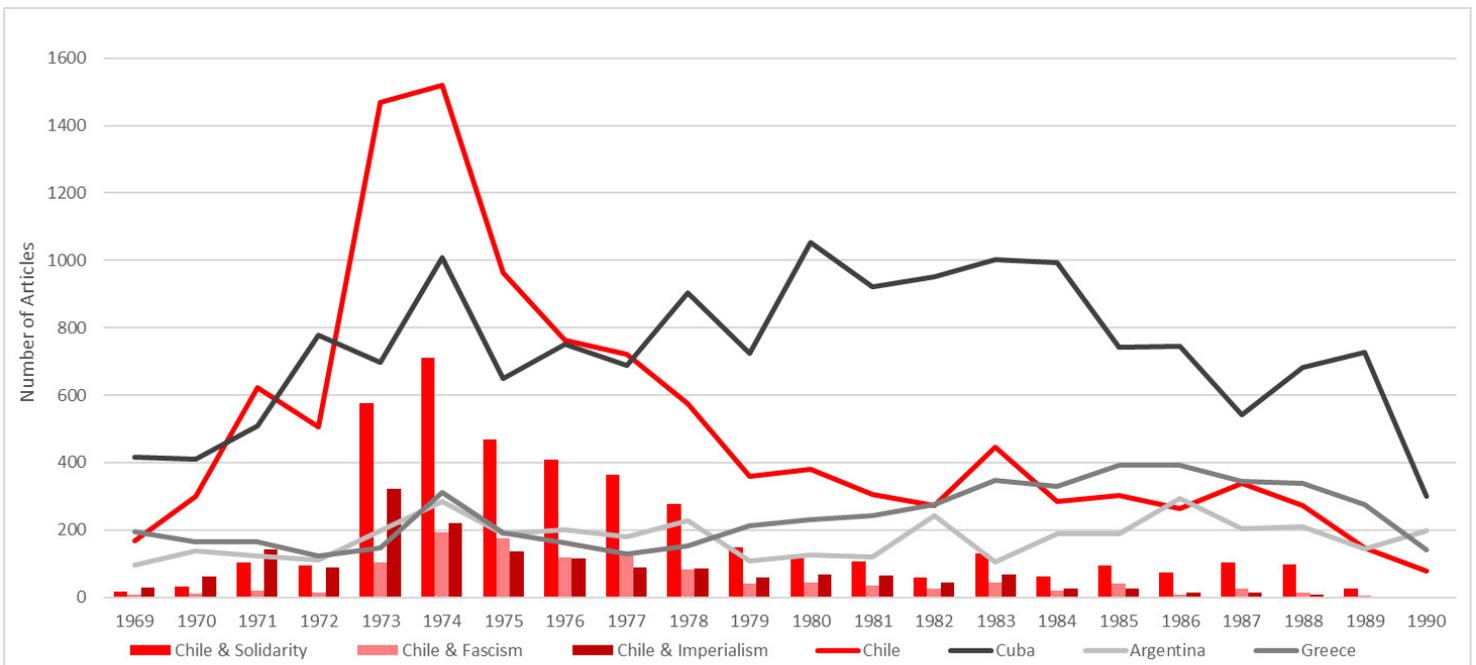


FIGURE 1: Frequency of selected keywords in the newspaper *Neues Deutschland*.

the total number of related articles in the media coverage dealing with Chile.

CONTENT ANALYSIS: DISASSEMBLING SOLIDARITY

As the quantitative approach draws attention to solidarity, a closer look at this concept on a qualitative level is required. By applying a frame analysis, we aim to examine how the GDR used solidarity regarding the military dictatorship and Chilean exile. Political actors used frames to describe issues in a certain way and thus construct them in this manner. This analysis departs from the understanding of frames as “interpretation scheme that structures the meaning of reality.”³⁴ Frames influence social reality by creating different social realities and leading to different receptions of the world. They always rely on certain values, norms and ideas, which Geoffrey Vickers describes with the term “appreciative system.”³⁵ This study aims to identify way in which the discourse of *Neues Deutschland* regarding the solidarity work with Chile refers to these apparently obvious assumptions. Moreover, by contextualizing these findings we

analyze which reasons might have led the GDR to frame some issues in a certain manner. We therefore examined a total of 41 exemplary articles, which were published in 27 different editions between 1973 (the year of the coup) and 1988 (the beginning of democratic transition in Chile). Most of them were published on the anniversary of the military coup or the day after, since during these dates most solidarity events took place and Chile was the focus of reporting.

There can be identified three main frames used in the articles dealing with the GDR’s solidarity work with Chile. In dealing with Pinochet’s dictatorship, the authors of *Neues Deutschland* use and refer to the *antifascist myth* as a key element for eastern German identity and the *international class struggle* as a humanist duty of socialist countries. The resistance against the military dictatorship is framed as the *opposition to an illegitimate state* (“Unrechtsstaat”) in order to create a common enemy and strengthen the GDR’s identity as a community.

ANTIFASCIST MYTH

In the reporting of *Neues Deutschland* the solidarity work with Chile is almost always framed as part of an antifascist fight against a fascist regime. Erich Honecker assures in a speech published in the newspaper that the GDR would do what it needed to get rid of “fascism, the spawn of

34 Erving Goffman, *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience* (Harvard: Harvard University Press., 1974).

35 Geoffrey Vickers, “Science and the Appreciative System,” *Human Relations* 21, no. 2, (1968): 99–119.

international finance capital, in Chile.”³⁶

Various articles compare the dictatorship in Chile with National Socialism and Germany under Hitler. By referring to an interview with Carlos Contreras Labarca, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile and director of the “Office Antifascist Chile” in the GDR, the author of the article relates the solidarity work with Chile to the antifascist resistance of the Soviet Union against National Socialism. He argues that “thirty years ago, fascism was smashed, mainly thanks to the heroic struggle of the Soviet Union”. Comparing National Socialism with Chilean military dictatorship he states that fascism “should never be tolerated in any country in the world.”³⁷

In a speech published in *Neues Deutschland*, Jorge Montes, member of the Communist Party of Chile, also explicitly draws parallels between the Chilean dictatorship and former fascist movements. Montes speaks of Chile as “a tragic example of the dangers that threaten humanity” and names Pinochet as “a somber symbol of the past that has tried in vain to resist the course of history.” He also thanks the GDR for their “antifascist solidarity,” which helped to free him after being

36 Erich Honecker cited in “Brüderliche Begegnung mit Kämpfern der Unidad Popular,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 1-2.

37 Carlos Contreras Labarca cited in “Solidarität wird weiter wachsen,” *Neues Deutschland*, February 13, 1975, 7.

arrested in Chile for three years.³⁸

In a report about a solidarity event in the Friedrichstadtpalast in Berlin one year after the military coup, the author refers to a speech of Orlando Millas, member of the political commission of the Communist Party of Chile and former minister in Allende’s government. “Orlando Millas combined the gratitude for solidarity with a congratulation on the 25th anniversary of the GDR, where—as he emphasized—fascism was exterminated.”³⁹ In 1977, *Neues Deutschland* published a speech by Erich Mückenberger, member of the Politburo of the SED, at a commemoration act of the antifascist resistance against National Socialism. In this speech Mückenberger also refers to the military coup that had happened four years before in Chile. He sees Chile as a proof that “fascism is still a real danger.” Mückenberger appeals to the public, saying that the GDR needs to “fulfil the legacy of the antifascist resistance fighters” and therefore should “strengthen and protect our socialist fatherland.”⁴⁰

These speeches and articles

38 Jorge Montes cited in “Solidarität — wir werden siegen!,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1977, 3.

39 Orlando Millas cited in “DDR steht fester denn je an der Seite der Patrioten Chiles,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 1-5.

40 Erich Mückenberger cited in “Alles für die Stärkung des sozialistischen Vaterlandes,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1977, 3.

each framed the military dictatorship of Pinochet as “fascist” and therefore the solidarity work of the GDR as “antifascist.” They highlighted the historical duty to resist a dictatorial regime, which they compared with German fascism under Hitler. By referring to this appreciative system, which consists of the commonly shared rejection of the barbaric crimes of the regime, these speeches emphasize the need to “restore freedom” in Chile. While highlighting the cruelty and the fascist character of the military dictatorship in Chile, the articles framed the GDR as a haven of freedom and the successful overcoming of fascism.

The statements of a contemporary witness, a Chilean political emigrant who we interviewed in addition to the frame analysis, illustrate these findings: After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 she was worried about “neo-Nazis that might enter the GDR,” which can be seen as a sign that she internalized the antifascist narrative, which was predominant in the GDR.

OPPOSITION TO ILLEGITIMATE STATE

This argumentative strategy of creating a common enemy is also reflected in how the GDR presented their own values in contrast to the Chilean dictatorship to strengthen its *raison d'être*. By describing the dictatorship in Chile as the epitome of an illegitimate state, the GDR framed their solidarity as proof of

their opposing humanist ideals. In a speech published in “*Neues Deutschland*” Paul Verner, member of the politburo of the SED, claimed that the “active solidarity of our party, the government and our people are expressions of the deeply humanist character of our socialist state.” Furthermore, he argued that the GDR’s “most immediate contribution to international solidarity” consisted of their high economic output. Thus, Verner claimed: “Let us therefore do everything we can to fulfil and deliberately exceed the 1974 economic plan being part of the socialist competition.”⁴¹ In his speech Verner addressed the appreciative system of the people of the GDR by referring to the shared ideals of humanist values to transmit the appeal to the citizens to work harder.

Nadja and Erich Bunke, prized⁴² GDR citizens, argued even more explicitly in a guest commentary published a few weeks after the military coup. Firstly, they expressed their empathy with Chile in an emotional way. “The support of the Chilean people is in our country not just a formal issue, but an affair of the heart.” Then, they asked everyone “whose heart beats for our brothers in Chile” to “now do even better in his work place to strengthen our

41 Paul Verner cited in “Chile Antifascista kämpft und wird siegreich sein!” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 3.

42 Parents of Tamara Bunke who fought in Che Guevara’s guerrilla group in Bolivia; awarded with the GDR Patriotic Order of Merit.

homeland, the German Democratic Republic, and the socialist community.”⁴³ By appealing to the citizens’ support of Chile, they called on them to exert more effort and to act in a more patriotic way.

In a speech directed to Erich Honecker, Carlos Contreras Labarca expressed his gratitude with the GDR. He called solidarity an “immanent duty of a socialist worker and peasant state.”⁴⁴ At the same event the present worker representatives adopted a resolution that guarantees “our passionate political, moral and material solidarity, help and support.” “Together with millions of peace-loving people all over the world”⁴⁵ they demanded that the Chilean government guaranteed the fulfilment of democratic and human rights. Thereby, they created a community that stood on the right side of history forming part of an international solidarity movement.

INTERNATIONAL CLASS STRUGGLE

By embedding the GDR’s solidarity with Chile into a global context, the authors of ND drew the focus towards an existing common ground, framing the opposition to the military regime as part of the international class struggle. Chilean opposition members were framed as “fighting class comrades”⁴⁶ and the solidarity with Chilean resistance as “manifestation of proletarian internationalism.”⁴⁷ The international dimension is also reflected in a speech of Hortensia Bussi de Allende, wife of Salvador Allende, who expressed her appreciation for the GDR’s “fraternal solidarity.” She praised the GDR as a “progressive nation that works successfully for the comprehensive construction of socialism, that fights for peace in the world and for the rapid development and growth and prosperity of all brother countries.”⁴⁸ This aspect is even more important since ND was considered the main diplomatic voice of the GDR in foreign

43 Nadja and Erich Bunke cited in “Hilfe für Chiles Volk - eine Herzenssache,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 26, 1973, 2.

44 Carlos Contreras Labarca cited in “Brüderliche Begegnung mit Kämpfern der Unidad Popular,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 2.

45 “Resolution der Teilnehmer an der Solidaritätsveranstaltung im Berliner Friedrichstadtpalast,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 2.

46 “An der Seite der Patrioten Chiles,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 11, 1974, 1.

47 “DDR steht fester denn je an der Seite der Patrioten Chiles,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 1.

48 Hortensia Bussi de Allende cited in “Alle Völker der Erde sind an unserer Seite,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 2-3.

countries. Thus, these articles not only addressed GDR's citizens, but also an international audience.

In an article about the matriculation of fifty Chilean students at the Karl-Marx-Universität in Leipzig, Minister Böhme highlighted the anti-imperialist character of the GDR's solidarity. He described the admission of the Chilean students as an "expression of the global anti-imperialist alliance and part of the comprehensive solidarity movement for the Chilean people". Also, Böhme highlighted the need to train revolutionaries as part of the international class struggle to overcome the Chilean military dictatorship: Böhme stated that "free Chile would need teachers, agronomists, doctors and many other university cadres who are also revolutionaries."⁴⁹

Furthermore, in a resolution adopted during a solidarity event by workers representatives and published in *Neues Deutschland*, they assured both their "passionate political-moral and material solidarity" and their "fraternal support [...] under the banner of proletarian internationalism."⁵⁰ During a film screening Oswaldo Puccion, vice president of the "Bureau antifascist Chile", expressed his gratitude

for the GDR's "great international concept" and "revolutionary socialist solidarity."⁵¹

The categorization of solidarity with Chile as part of the international class struggle not only expressed the historic materialistic understanding of global developments but also framed the important role the GDR played within this process. This reflected the GDR's convictions and at the same time aimed to gain legitimacy for their political project.

The different frames of solidarity resembled one another through their emotional discourse and class-militant vocabulary. There is not a single negative article dealing with Chilean opposition members or political emigrants. Moreover, the speeches by and interviews with Chileans only focused on positive aspects of the GDR and its solidarity work. The GDR is described as "second homeland" by functionaries of the Chilean Communist and Socialist Parties.⁵² Incidentally, one article mentions the language barriers between Chilean emigrants and the German population.⁵³ As one of the interviewed temporary witnesses confirms, many Chileans did not manage to learn German. This indicates that even though the

49 Hans-Joachim Böhme cited in "Junge Chilenen nehmen Studium in der DDR auf," *Neues Deutschland*, September 11, 1974, 6-7.

50 "Resolution der Teilnehmer an der Solidaritätsveranstaltung im Berliner Friedrichstadtpalast," *Neues Deutschland*, September 12, 1974, 2.

51 Oswaldo Puccion cited in "Solidarität mit Chiles Volk," *Neues Deutschland*, April 18, 1978, 2-4.

52 "Solidaritätsmeetings in vielen Betrieben," *Neues Deutschland*, February 13, 1975, 1.

53 "Lieder, die uns einen," *Neues Deutschland*, February 13, 1975, 1.

material solidarity was extensive, the political asylum was limited in time. The description of the GDR as “temporary refuge”⁵⁴ is an indicator that the Chileans were perceived as guests, who were tolerated for a limited time.

CONCLUSION

The media coverage of Chilean political emigrants and the GDR’s solidarity work in *Neues Deutschland* had a clear propagandistic function. Firstly, the quantitative content analysis demonstrated the extraordinary presence of Chile in *Neues Deutschland* being the official party newspaper of the SED, even though the total number of Chileans seeking exile in the GDR remained low compared to other immigration groups. While (anti)fascism and (anti) imperialism were main keywords in the GDR’s discourse on Chile and the military dictatorship of Pinochet, solidarity plays an even more extraordinary role in the official media coverage of ND. Even though our main focus is on the qualitative analysis of exemplary articles, this quantitative approach allows us also to draw general conclusions on the role of Chile in the GDR’s media coverage on a macro level. This mixed method analysis is an unusual approach, since most research on the

Global Cold War is mainly qualitative. The quantitative analysis underlines the conclusions derived from the qualitative analysis and strengthens its representativity.

By applying a frame analysis on the GDR’s discourse regarding the military dictatorship and Chilean exile, we showed how by referring to socialist and humanist values the concept of solidarity was used to gain support among the Eastern German population. We identified three main frames that structured the GDR’s discourse on Chile: by framing their solidarity work as part of an antifascist fight against a fascist regime, SED referred to the *antifascist founding myth* of the GDR. Since Pinochet’s dictatorship served as a perfect example of a barbaric and antidemocratic regime, the GDR depicted the military dictatorship in Chile as a common enemy and tried to strengthen the Eastern German identity, based on antifascist and antiimperialist values.

Moreover, the GDR presented its solidarity with Chilean political emigrants as an *opposition to an illegitimate state* to prove their own humanist ideals. Many articles on the GDR’s solidarity with Chilean opposition aimed at putting the GDR on the right side of history by taking a leading role in the international solidarity movement with Chile.

The GDR’s opposition to the military regime was not only framed as the leading role of the international solidarity movement but also as part of the *international class struggle*. The official discourse

⁵⁴ “An der Seite der Patrioten Chiles,” *Neues Deutschland*, September 11, 1974, 1-4.

was characterized by a historic materialistic understanding of global developments, in which the GDR's role was presented as crucial. By doing so the SED aimed to gain legitimacy for its political project.

The study shows how the GDR framed the situation in Chile and its solidarity with Chilean opposition in a certain way to call for more effort among the population, urging them to act in a more patriotic way. Thus, the framing of the GDR's solidarity work and Chilean exile not only aimed at legitimizing the Eastern German state, but also influencing the population in line with the SED's political goals.

Furthermore, this analysis demonstrates the important role of media and propaganda during the Cold War, being mainly constituted by an ideological conflict. The importance of Chile for the GDR and the extraordinary presence in the SED's party newspaper is an example of how global developments were entangled with political developments in other countries. One could say that the GDR's solidarity work and its representation in the state-owned media were part of the ideological "battle for the conquest of human minds" being constituent of the Global Cold War.